

Situational Analysis:

There are more than 2,500 emojis on our keyboards. They allow us to show emotions, give clarity and context to our conversations, and illustrate the world around us. Emojis also help us express important parts of our identities, including race and sexual orientation. But what if your identity is not represented on the keyboard, meaning you have to represent yourself in less than authentic ways? Tinder, a leader in identity issues -- having led the charge to introduce non-binary gender identities into dating apps -- decided it was time for change.

As the world's most diverse dating app, Tinder is used in 190 countries and available in more than 40 languages. When a [study](#) found that the rise of online dating (spurred by Tinder) has led to an increase in interracial marriages, our brand team leaned into diversity as a point of differentiation among a sea of competitors. In doing so, Tinder could use the emojis as a leaping off point for a brand conversation about love that knows no bounds. **#RepresentLove** was born, celebrating interracial love. We petitioned [Unicode](#) to create a series of 55 interracial couple emojis, so the nearly three in four (72%) Tinder users who have dated someone of a different race can be represented.

A big deal over a little symbol? Not really. The "Global Tinder Survey on Interracial Relationships" (a survey we developed and fielded on Tinder's behalf), showed nearly 60% of singles around the world have been in a romantic relationship with someone of a different race. So, while same-sex couples and people of different races have emojis to represent them visually, the time was right to rally for people in interracial relationships to be able to express themselves using the universal language of our digital age.

Insights:

Recent [research](#) shows that people who use online dating platforms are more open to dating people who are different from themselves. In fact, rates of interracial marriage are on the rise thanks in large part to apps like Tinder. To ensure that #RepresentLove was grounded in recent, ownable data, we conducted the Global Tinder Survey on Interracial Relationships. The survey polled more than 4,000 adults age 25-45 in the U.S., UK, Australia and France, including both online and offline daters. The results revealed intriguing, brand-positive sentiments. Not only are Tinder users more open to dating outside their own race; being on Tinder has made them so.

Almost three out of four (72%) of those surveyed view Tinder as the most racially diverse dating app, and 77% of Tinder users are very open-minded about who they date when using dating sites/apps. In contrast, just 8% perceive top competitor Bumble as racially diverse. Most respondents (53%) who have dated someone of a different race said these relationships made them more prone to engagement in social/political issues. Among Tinder users this number rose to 65%. We also learned that those who have been in an interracial relationship felt it enabled them to experience new places, hobbies, activities and culture. On the topic of emoji, a majority of respondents (52%) said interracial couples are underrepresented in today's most ubiquitous tech languages -- meaning emojis, GIFs and memes. So, Tinder was confident that a push to introduce interracial couple emojis into our screens and lives would resonate among its users.

Planning:

To create awareness and support for Tinder's petition and #RepresentLove initiative throughout the world, we employed three key strategies:

- Through earned and owned communications channels, underscore Tinder's commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion in the app, using the emoji launch as the latest proof point of this commitment
- Leverage ownable data to tell a larger story about the diversity of Tinder's users and their openness to interracial relationships
- Create informative and emotional content that Tinder users and targets would be compelled to share

These strategies came to life through earned media storytelling, our global survey data, an inspiring anthem video, and a digital influencer program enlisting celebrities to share their custom-created interracial couple emojis to garner additional awareness and buzz.

We outlined two measurable business objectives for the #RepresentLove campaign:

- Create a media moment drawing attention to Tinder’s recent diversity and inclusion efforts
- Attract new and lapsed users to Tinder by highlighting the inspiring melting pot that comprises the brand’s user base

Execution:

Tinder knew it was on the side of justice for all love connections, but lacked expertise around the actual process to create new emojis. With support from Emojination, the campaign began with a formal [proposal](#) to Unicode, the body responsible for creating and coding the emojis in most of our devices. Jennifer 8 Lee, an emoji expert and vice-chair of the Unicode Emoji Subcommittee, helped us draft the technical proposal.

It was also sent to Alexis Ohanian, the co-founder of Reddit who had just recently married Serena Williams, for his feedback. Ohanian previously worked with Jennifer 8 on the hijab emoji initiative. He was inspired by our interracial emoji concept and added his signature. He and Serena are arguably the most high-profile interracial couple in the U.S., so we knew this would help serve up visibility around #RepresentLove.

To further amplify our message Tinder posted an anthem [video](#) on YouTube and Tinder channels that posed a simple question: “*Isn’t it time emoji represented all love?*” The video and the Change.org [petition](#) went live on the same day, driving more than 50,000 signatures to date.

To engage users on social, we called for people in interracial relationships to tweet a photo of themselves in the iconic emoji pose (holding hands) for a chance to be “emojified.” We then created custom emojis from key submissions, sending them back to the couples on Twitter.

The campaign backbone was a strong earned media push after the launch of the Change.org petition (using the anthem video as a key asset to compel media to cover) timed to outreach surrounding our global survey stats. We offered interviews with Tinder leaders to promote the brand’s commitment to important diversity and inclusion initiatives. Celebrity influencers, including Alexis Ohanian and Nicole Richie, were tapped to post on social once the campaign went live to help extend reach and encourage people to sign the petition.

Evaluation:

#1 Create a media moment drawing attention to Tinder’s recent diversity and inclusion efforts

The world fell in love with #RepresentLove. More than 200 unique stories ran, achieving more than 1.789 billion impressions globally and demonstrating Tinder’s global reach in markets like the U.S., U.K., France, Spain, Germany, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Australia, India and Russia. #RepresentLove also drove digital and social conversation around the brand, including 46.3 million uses of @tinder and #representlove, 5.2 million YouTube video views, and more than 50,000 signatures on the Change.org petition. In addition, the campaign earned 5.4 million digital ad impressions, including video view-through rates of over 30%, surpassing industry benchmarks. These results and the overwhelming outpouring support from media, influencers, celebrities and users from around the globe validate that it’s something truly worth Tinder’s time and attention.

#2 Attract new/lapsed users to Tinder by highlighting the inspiring melting pot that is the brand’s user base

The campaign – which represented the most successful emoji petition ever – was so emotionally powerful that it resulted in more than 17% new and re-downloads of the app during the campaign timeframe in February/March 2018. That means the program’s messages resonated not only with new users, but also with lapsed users who had deleted the app, a huge win for the brand. During the week the campaign went live, Tinder saw a 34.8% week-over-week increase in app re-downloads and a 43.2% month-over-month increase in re-downloads.

Aside from brand impact for Tinder, the campaign took a huge step toward its ultimate goal when Unicode met in July 2018. The board voted unanimously to approve Tinder’s interracial couple emoji proposal. The emojis received final approval this past January, and will be available on our keyboards by mid-2019.